



THIS WEEK IN IRAQ

The Official Newsletter of the Multi-National Force - Iraq

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May 12, 2008

IP Playing Larger Role

FORWARD OPERATING BASE

DELTA — Iraqi Police in Wasit Province have made significant capacity gains in recent months to improve security for the citizens of Iraq.

Their planning ability has greatly improved and their effectiveness increases daily, said Col. Peter Baker, commander of the 214th Fires Brigade.

Much of the improvement is due to the actions of Maj. Gen. Hannin al-Ameer, the provincial director of police, appointed in September.

"He is very competent," Baker said. "He has taken a large force and made immediate and long-term improvements – not an easy task for a unit of that size."

One significant turning point for the force happened during the late-March Shia uprising: the firing of 134 Iraqi Policemen – both troopers and officers – from IP Emergency Response Unit 4, said 1st Lt. Lynette Jefferson, a platoon leader for the 511th Military Police Company, attached to the 214th FB, of Fort Drum, N.Y., the unit responsible for training Iraqi Police-

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Specialist Joseph Fluty, 511th MP Co., of Fort Drum, N.Y., maintains security as Iraqi Policemen search vehicles at a checkpoint in al-Kut, Iraq, May 7. U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Daniel T. West.

This Week in News ...

Salvadoran Forces
Celebrate Birthday



Joint Patrol Builds
Capacity



Women's Committee Reps Meet

FORWARD OPERATING BASE

KALSU — Representatives from four local women's committees in the Rasheed Nahia met in Mahmudiyah, 20 miles south of Baghdad, May 5.

Among those attending the gathering were Soldiers of Multi-National Division – Center and the U.S. State Department's embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team Baghdad-7, who helped organize the committees.

Women's issues are nothing new to the Government of Iraq, and now, after years of turmoil and the rebuilding of the

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A team of Soldiers from Company A, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division patrol the Euphrates River during a demonstration at Patrol Base Kemple, May 5. Photo by 101st Airborne Division (AA) Public Affairs.

Preparing for River Patrols

CAMP STRIKER — Most Soldiers who join the Army can honestly say they would have never imagined patrolling the Euphrates River in a boat.

Some Soldiers will soon be able to say they've done just that.

Company A, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), is training to operate boats the unit received, May 2.

"I'm pretty excited," said Cpl. Tomas Montoya, Co. A, 3-187th Inf. Regt. "I never thought I'd have the opportunity to work on boats over here in Iraq."

"The boats will create new opportunities and capabilities in their operations along the Euphrates River," said Lt. Col. Andrew Rohling, commander of 3-187th Inf. Regt.

"They bring a sense of security, strength and versatility the local populace has not always seen from the water."

"The boats add invaluable dimensions to the unit's ability to conduct full-spectrum operations," said Maj. Curtis Crum, 3rd BCT operations officer. "The boats give the brigade a unique capability that is not typically resident in this type of unit's arsenal."

The unit's predecessors, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, ordered the boats in November 2007 to conduct operations along the Euphrates to deter insurgent activity. The boats were delivered to 3-187th Inf. Regt., in January.

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Petraeus Praises IP Gains in Past Year

BAGHDAD — U.S. Army Gen. David Petraeus said the courage of the Iraqi police and the Iraqi Security Forces while working together helped drive down the level of violence and level of civilians deaths in Iraq in the last 15 months at the Baghdad Police Summit last week.

Speaking before a Baghdad Police Summit, Petraeus, commander of the Multi-National Force-Iraq, told an audience of approximately 180 participants that "the decrease in violence has been very significant." He noted the Iraqi Police had also made huge gains in manning, training and equipping their force, all of which will strengthen the police in the future.

"We have seen in the past year in communities like Salman Pak where the police have gone back into that these communities have come back to life," said Petraeus. "Markets have been renewed and businesses and schools reopened. Clearly, we have seen progress."

He said "Al-Qaeda and other criminal groups will try to re-establish their presence in these communities. The Iraqi Security Forces will have to remain vigilant to secure the peace

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ISF, SOI Presence Allows Families to Return Home

FORWARD OPERATING BASE KAL-SU — Two years ago, al-Qaeda destroyed the Chalabi village in the Sayafiya region. A Shia tribe in a predominately Sunni area, the Chalabis fled to Mahmudiyah, Baghdad and other surrounding areas.

About four months ago, Coalition forces entered the area and set up Sons of Iraq security and Iraqi Army checkpoints. Soon after, Soldiers from Company C, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), discovered residents

had returned to the area.

"These families had heard from word of mouth that the area was now secure so now they are back," said Capt. Joe Johnson, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-187th Inf. Regt.

Now, Coalition forces are bringing aid to about 150 men and boys that came to rebuild and continue securing the area. Soldiers provided shovels, wood, bricks, mortar, cement and basic living essentials such as food and water recently.

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First Lieutenant Austin Commons, 1-187th Inf. Regt. shakes hands with an SOI leader in Chalabi Village. Courtesy photo.